

A
WARNING TO BRITONS;

OR,

A short Account of the treacherous and inhuman
conduct of the

FRENCH OFFICERS AND SOLDIERS,

During the Invasion of GERMANY in 1796 :

SELECTED AND TRANSLATED FROM A GERMAN
PUBLICATION.

By ANTHONY AUFRÈRE, Esq.

*For they sleep not, except they have done mischief; and their
sleep is taken away, unless they cause some to fall :*

*For they eat the bread of wickedness, and drink the wine
of violence.*

Prov. iv. 16, 17.

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A WARNING TO BRITONS, &c.

FRENCH CRUELTY.

THE French having crossed the Rhine in June, 1796, the circle of Suabia and the different governments therein, were desirous of saving their subjects from the calamities of war, and from the cruelties which had every where attended the success of the French, and therefore they immediately entered into a convention with the Directory of France, and agreed to pay in money 11,458,332 German florins, (about 286,450*l.* sterling) and 14,000 horses, 5,500 oxen, 275,000 quintals of bread corn, 162,000 sacks of oats, 300,000 quintals of hay, and 175,000 pairs of shoes. For these great sacrifices the French promised that the persons and property of the inhabitants should be respected and undisturbed—that they should in no wise be molested in their laws, customs, and religion—that what was delivered to the army for subsistence should be taken in part of the contributions agreed upon—and that what the soldiers should purchase, should be paid for in cash.

You will now see how grossly they violated their promises, and what cruelties they inflicted upon the farmers and villagers in the districts through which they passed.

Upon the 4th of August, 1796, *Ferino*, one of the French generals, required from the town of Altorf a present of 300 louis [a louis is nearly equal in value to a pound sterling] whilst *Tarreau*, another general, extorted 125 louis from five small villages; and a commissary imposed the most exorbitant contributions of provisions and clothing, of which he sold the greater part, and then exacted the delivery of similar articles. The French having been successful in an engagement with the Austrians at the close of September, began immediately afterwards to plunder and destroy in the most outrageous manner. In the course of the first night after the engagement, some of the soldiers purposely and wantonly set fire to two houses in the town, and would not permit any attempts to be made to quench the flames. Several other houses were more than half consumed by fire, in consequence of their scattering red hot coals and burning candles about the rooms, under the beds, and amongst every heap of combustibles they could discover, so that nothing but the greatest vigilance and exertions of the proprietors could have prevented the entire destruction of the town.

When Altorf was reduced to such poverty as to afford no further temptation to the pillage

gers, they spread themselves in bands over the surrounding country, attacked the cottages and habitations of the peasantry (to whom they had promised liberty, equality, and affluence) rifled their pockets, destroyed their furniture, tore up the floors of their rooms, cut open the mattresses and feather-beds, dug up the ground in the cellars and gardens, turned over even the contents of the privies, in hopes of finding some concealed treasure, returned six or seven times to the same houses, and never quitted them until they had left nothing behind them but the bare walls. Oxen, cows, and swine were either driven off, cut in pieces upon the spot, or left cruelly mutilated; geese and poultry were carried away either dead or alive; and such provisions as could not either be consumed or conveyed away, were trodden under foot, or mixed with sand, ashes, and ordure: nor did these russians spare even the stores of bread which it is usual in that country to keep dried for consumption in the winter. Many cellars were left half full of wine, which had run from the casks they wantonly had flaved; and the houses were long afterwards impregnated with the vapour of the brandy which they had poured about the rooms in the most wasteful manner. They destroyed even the milk-pails and all the appendages of the dairy; and in many dwellings there was not even a bench or a chair unbroken. The peasants were sometimes

threatened with immediate death, and sometimes put to extreme torture, in order to procure a discovery of money and other valuables, which they were accused of having concealed ; and many were severely wounded and crippled, either by musket-balls, blows with the but-ends of the firelocks, or strokes of the broad sword. The deepest and most apparent poverty was not even a protection against them ; for beggars were stripped of their rags ; and the number of those who were left without a shirt upon their backs is by no means inconsiderable. Grey hairs and lisping infancy, the sick, the dying, and even women in labour, were alike exposed to the most inhuman treatment, and were dragged from their beds, kicked about, and frequently wounded, under pretence that they were the keepers of concealed treasure. The women and children who attempted to escape, were pursued, plundered, and violated ; and girls from ten to twelve years of age were deprived of their innocence and health by these republican barbarians. Neither age nor infirmity, nor yet the most offensive disorders, were able to set bounds to their more than brutal lust ; and ten, twelve, and even twenty of these depraved wretches, are known successively to have gratified their passions with the same object, whilst their shameless colleagues either kept guard at the door, or held loaded pistols and fixed bayonets at the head of the unhappy sufferer. Even in the infirmary near Weingarten did

these cannibals commit the same horrid crimes, and outrage persons suffering under the most disgusting maladies, and such as preclude them from communication with the rest of mankind. But delicacy forms no part of the character of the French republican; for at Heidenheim they used as spits for their meat the iron spikes upon which they had found the heads of some lately executed malefactors, and made their fire with the wheels upon which the corpses had been exposed. Even the bodies of young women, who had expired under their barbarity, and of women who but a few hours before had been in labour, were made use of to satiate the infernal lust of these monsters in human shape, degraded far beneath the beasts of the field. With menaces of slaughter, with blows, with unsheathed sabres, and with loaded muskets, they enforced universal submission; and dreadful was their revenge when their inclinations were resisted. Whilst they were plundering, destroying, dishonouring, and committing such excesses as humanity shudders to relate, at the village of Ingoldingen, from the second to the fourth of October, six or eight volunteers rushed into the house of Jacob Furst, a farmer, whose wife they ill-treated, and threatened with instant death if she refused to consent to their desires; but that resolute woman declaring that she had rather meet death than dishonour, attacked the ruffians, and, assisted by her husband, who fortunately came in, drove them out of the house. De-

terminated however to revenge themselves, they set fire to the dwelling, which, with the furniture, granary, and every thing but the cattle, became a prey to the flames. Three other houses met a similar fate; and the damages sustained by this and an adjoining village amounted to the sum of 4,000*l*.

Not a trace of decency, not the least regard to religion and its customs, appeared in the conduct of the French soldiery. In the churches they broke open the pyx, trampled the host under foot, carried away the communion plate and the robes of the priests, destroyed the crucifixes and other images, and treated with ignominy every thing that is deemed holy by the catholic, and respected by the well-meaning man of every religion. In one of the villages, where the church was stripped of its ornaments, and the minister completely pillaged, they placed upon the altar the figure of Satan, which they had taken from the representation of the redeemer tempted in the desert; and in another village they placed a crucifix before the fire, and, amidst shouts of the most indecent mirth, turned it round like meat roasting upon a spit, whilst the grey-headed minister of the parish, at the venerable age of eighty-three, was not only plundered and insulted, but severely beaten, as a reward for the hospitality with which he had received them. The damages sustained by this small district amounted to upwards of 45,000*l*.

Pfullendorf.—Upon the second of August

a division of the column under the orders of General Ferino marched through this village, when some chasseurs belonging to the advanced guard entered a shop, and forcibly took silk handkerchiefs and other goods to the value of 100 florins, for which they offered some assignats in payment ; but upon the shopkeeper refusing to take such useless paper, they struck at him with their sabres, and left the shop with shouts of laughter and torrents of abuse. Five others entered the house of one of the magistrates, loudly asking for wine and victuals, with which they were speedily and amply served, and for which they testified their gratitude by robbing their entertainer of his watch and money.

In the neighbouring village of Neubronn, belonging to the prince of Furstenberg, six riflemen imposed a contribution of 300 florins, or about 27*l.* sterling, pillaged several houses, and so ill-treated such as endeavoured to protect their property, and to resist the insults offered to their wives and daughters, that many honest and industrious labourers were reduced to the greatest distress.

If the rough and barbarous manner in which these armed russians extorted what they wanted, excited terror and detestation, their intemperance gave rise to an equal degree of astonishment ; for two Frenchmen would devour at a meal as much as would serve three hard-working Germans during three or four days ; and between the hours of two and nine, they would

frequently have three complete meals, which they generally moistened with whole rivers of wine, plentifully sweetened with sugar, and usually strengthened with cherry-brandy.

Pfullendorf and the adjacent villages suffered, however, but little, in comparison with other places, until the enemy began to retreat, when the French not only carried away or destroyed all the forage and corn they could find, but entirely demolished a small hamlet in the neighbourhood.

Upon the 5th of October, General *Moreau* himself fixed his head quarters at Pfullendorf, and was followed by his whole army, which was distributed about the country, and, like the preceding hordes, rendered itself for ever infamous by the gratification of every savage passion, the commission of every sort of excess, and the practice of every species of extortion. A brave fellow, who had assisted in driving some of the plunderers out of the village he inhabited, was afterwards recognized and shot; as were two farmers in another village, whilst endeavouring to prevent their doors from being forced open.

A poor woman, 60 years of age, who was gleaning in a field, was forcibly thrown down by one of the republican barbarians, and menaced with death if she did not yield to his brutal desires, whilst another stood with his bayonet at the breast of her aged husband, and forced him to be a witness of his wife's dishonor. A church was broken open and plun-

dered, and the minister's house completely rifled, under the eyes of General Moreau himself, who, to the lamentations of the sufferer, contemptuously replied, "I cannot prevent it"—and quietly betook himself to his favourite cherry-brandy, in which he indulged himself to excess, like the meanest of his soldiers.

Waldsee.—At Waldsee the French physicians and surgeons made large requisitions of drugs, vinegar, shirts, and cloth; which they either sold or converted to their own use, and suffered the wounded and sick to remain exposed to the burning heat of the sun, unattended, throughout the day. In a hamlet near Markdorf, ten brutal French soldiers alternately violated the chastity of a woman, who hourly expected to be taken in labour, and whose husband was forcibly made a witness of their barbarity. An officer too, whose assistance had been requested by the neighbours, upon entering the house, was so far from reproving the soldiers, that—horrible to relate! he immediately followed their example, and added to the injuries already offered to the expiring woman. In another village, a woman who had only borne a child about eight days, was dishonoured, and treated with such violence, that her recovery was extremely doubtful; and when, in despair, she fled from them in her shift, and with her infant in her arms, she was pursued by the loose jokes and malign shouts of these inhuman villains.

Humanity shudders at the recollection of the enormities committed by the French at the village of Bremen, which upon the 6th of October was beset by a band of robbers, under the denomination of republican soldiers, who mad with wine, rushed into the houses with the most hideous war-whoop, and had immediate recourse to their well-known system of plunder. All the coffers and closets were broken open and rifled—all the household furniture was destroyed—the peasants were required, with loaded pistols at their breasts, to deliver up their money—the beds and bedding were unripped and examined—and, under pretence of searching for concealed treasure, not only the floors of the rooms were torn up, but even infants were vehemently dragged from their cradles, and many families were deprived of nearly all their property. But still more terrible to these peaceful and innocent country people, was the infernal manner in which the female sex was treated by these villains. In the whole village there was neither maiden, wife, nor widow, who was not forcibly and repeatedly dishonored; and such was the depravity of these miscreants, that eight, ten, and frequently more than that number, successively insulted the same unfortunate victim with the accomplishment of their brutal purposes. Neither early youth, nor hoary-headed age, nor deformity, nor yet the most offensive disorders, could abate the fury of their passions; and not only husbands, but fathers, and—to fill up the

measure of their iniquity—even little children, were made to be witnesses of these abominable outrages. One woman, who, with her husband, had struggled ineffectually against the attempts of six of these monsters, was dragged into the fields, over hedges and ditches, repeatedly dishonoured, and left half dead upon the ground, whilst her husband was cruelly maimed with their sabres; and even her sucking infant was treated with the greatest inhumanity. Others of the female sex, both here and in the adjacent villages, were fastened to trees, and violated by succeeding numbers.

Not satisfied with these excesses, they proceeded to rifle the churches, and, with the most blasphemous expressions, destroyed the altars, polluted the communion table with their ordure, pulled down and reviled the image of our Saviour, trampled the host under foot, and then threw it to the dogs.

Markdorf.—When the French appeared upon the banks of the lake of Constance, their leaders affected to be surprised that people should be afraid of them, and that many should desert the country: “For,” said they, “we are only come to offer peace to the Emperor, and not to violate either your religion, your customs, your persons, or your property, all which shall be most carefully respected and preserved.” This assurance was publicly given to the deputies from several towns and villages by General

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Tarreau, who added, " that it was his particular object and business to maintain the severest discipline and the most exact order in his army." Tranquillized by this serious declaration, the deputies returned home, and upon the third of August, at noon-day, the French, to the number of 6,000 men, entered Markdorf and the neighbouring hamlets, and were entertained as liberally as possible by the inhabitants. But they soon began to break open doors and commit thefis, even under the eyes of the staff-officers, and some of the horde spread themselves over the surrounding country, where these self-termed protectors of the peasantry tore the clothes from the backs, and the shoes and stockings from the feet and legs of the poor cottagers and farmers who offered them provisions, broke open their cellars, rifled their closets and coffers, carried away all the valuable articles they could find, destroyed the household furniture, and cruelly beat and wounded such as made a show of defending their property.

Amongst the innumerable acts of inhumanity committed at Wehr, the following deserves to be recorded. Five soldiers having forced open the door of a house, in which lay a poor woman who had been taken in labour about twelve hours before, they, with drawn swords at the breast of the still suffering woman, demanded her money, and upon being told that she had none, ransacked the dwelling and out-house, and carried away all the furniture, wearing appa-

rel, swine, and poultry they could find, and at departing, one of them, by way of humanity, threw a dead fowl at the head of the sufferer, and told her she might make herself some broth with it. [It is a fact that the republicans frequently drowned their own children, born to them by their wives or concubines, during their march through Franconia.]

The retreat of the French through this district was marked by similar instances of rapine and brutality. In one village they violated and so barbarously abused a girl about 15 years of age, that in three days she was a corpse. In the same village they broke into the house of a shop-keeper who was recovering from a severe illness, cut his bedding in pieces, scattered the feathers about the premises, rifled the house and shop, and having discovered in the garden a chest full of goods which had been deposited there for security, carried it off with the rest of their booty. They not only plundered another house, but, with the malevolence of evil spirits, mixed together all the wheat-corn, oats, and rye they could find, and strewed them over the apartments. The village was completely pillaged and ruined, the utensils necessary for the vintage were thrown into the Rhine, the churches were plundered, the pyx broken to pieces, and the consecrated host trampled under foot. In the environs of the camp the corpses of several women were found, who had been violated and

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abused even unto death ; and, however incredible it may appear, it is a fact, that the monsters satisfied their brutal appetites with corpses, and with some unhappy victims in the agonies of death.

Radolf-Zell.—Several towns, and Radolf-Zell in particular, suffered much for their distinguished attachment to their sovereign and constitution ; and upon the retreat of Tarreau, the last-mentioned town was saved from threatened conflagration, by a present of two fine horses to the general, and by supplying him and his army with an abundance of the most costly provisions that could be procured ; after which the soldiers destroyed the vineyards, the produce of which was upon the point of being gathered, cut down the fruit trees, in order the more easily to pluck the fruit, and broke down the hedges and fences of the gardens. In the neighbouring villages they stole all the horses, cattle, sheep, and swine, as well as all the stock of wine in the cellars, and the store of corn in the granaries and barns. The female sex here also met with the most barbarous usage, the consequences of which were fatal to many of them.

At Engelures, the parsonage, fifteen other houses, and eighteen barns were speedily reduced to ashes, with their furniture, and all the produce of the late abundant harvest : And the village of Barenthal was first plundered and then set on fire, when the church, eighteen houses, and as many barns, were reduced to a heap of

ruins. At the small village of Watterdingen the soldiers of the self-called Great Nation plundered, carried off, and destroyed, cattle, poultry, horses, provisions, and furniture to the value of 2,000*l.* broke open the church, trampled on every thing that is sacred, and dangerously wounded the minister. Nor can any thing equal their brutal lust and ferocity towards the female sex. Three women, already past their seventieth year, six lying-in women, four far advanced in their pregnancy, and twelve young girls, were, by their outrages, brought almost to the gates of death. Even children, thirteen years of age, lost their innocence and their health, in the constrained presence of others still younger than themselves; and five men, who attempted to protect the honor of their wives, were trampled under foot, and left half dead with severe wounds from the broad swords of these atrocious villains.

At Emmingen the Prince of Fustenberg's steward, who in attempting to escape, fell down and dislocated his ankle, was pursued by the soldiers, and nearly beaten to death; after which they pillaged his habitation, and committed every species of enormity. Several young girls and married women fell a sacrifice to the outrageous passions of these ruffians, against whom even grey hairs afforded no protection; for an old woman near seventy years of age was successively dishonored by four of these monsters, whose brutality words are wanting sufficiently to reprobate.

It was reserved for general *Ferino* to crown all these misdeeds with an action at Engen eternally disgraceful to his country ; for upon the 9th of October, under pretence of the treachery of the inhabitants, he commanded one of the suburbs to be set on fire ; and in order to prevent any attempts to quench the flames, he surrounded it with a guard. In a short time thirty-three houses and barns, with all their contents, were reduced to ashes and ruins, and only the church and four cottages escaped the fury of the conflagration ; but having received advice at midnight that the Austrians, to the number of 10,000, were in pursuit of him, *Ferino* became so furious, that he ordered another suburb to be set on fire, and twelve houses fell a sacrifice to the inhumanity of the republicans, who left the place, followed by the curses and bitter lamentations of numerous families and individuals, whose ruin they had thus wantonly accomplished.

I have purposely omitted the detail of the various acts of plundering and destroying, and shall close this melancholy account by stating, that the losses sustained by the people of this town and twelve neighbouring villages, amounted at the lowest computation to more than 33,000*l.* sterling.

General Tarreau.—Several of the leaders of the French hordes have, by their misdeeds, for ever connected their names with infamy ;

but General Tarreau united in himself the several bad qualities of the rest, and cannot be mentioned without horror and detestation. The most unbounded rapacity, insatiable cruelty, intemperance, thirst of revenge, vulgar insolence, contempt of every thing sacred and decent, and the disavowal of all the feelings of humanity, formed the basis of the character of this man, who in no country but in France, and there only under the auspices of such a revolution, could ever have been entrusted with the command of an army. Some of his monstrous excesses have already been recorded, and it remains only to be told, that when the French were obliged to give way before the Austrians, this man, raging like a tiger that had lost its prey, arrived upon the 22d of September at Hofen, where he established his head quarters, and with his worthy associate Labrousse, and his confidential valet Laguerrée, endeavoured to make himself a small compensation for the loss of the spoils of Vienna, of which the French had thought themselves secure. His whole character will best be known from the following dreadful declaration, which was continually upon his lips, that "He only repented of having at any time acted with humanity, and of not having converted into dust and ashes all the cities, villages, and convents he had seen upon his march." His life at Hofen was one continued scene of cruelty, robbery, intemperance, and debauchery; and upon the 23d of

September he sent a requisition to Constance of 6,000 pints of brandy, to be delivered in 24 hours, under pain of being given up to be plundered by the soldiery. No more than half the quantity demanded could be found in Constance, and was sent off towards head quarters by water, but was detained by contrary winds; upon which Tarreau threatened not only to set fire to the town, but to put to death the chief magistrate, and several others whom he detained as hostages, and who, after passing the night under the apprehensions of approaching death, would probably have fallen a sacrifice to the passion of this sanguinary commander, if the brandy had not arrived in the morning before the hour appointed for their execution. The booty remained three days at head quarters, and was then sold by the commissary Stouhlen to the neighbouring Swiss; nor did the French soldiers taste one drop of this liquor, which had been extorted under pretence that it was necessary for the army.

That not only privates, but even officers of rank either pillaged or divided the spoil, could be proved by innumerable instances of well-attested facts. Ecclesiastics of every description and every religion, and particularly the professed of both sexes, seemed the chief objects of republican malevolence, immorality, and cruelty, in which the soldiers were led on and encouraged by their officers. At Biberach, at Durheim, at Biburg, at Stozingen, at Aystetten,

at Donauwerth, and at many other towns and villages, (as may be seen more fully set forth in the original publication) crimes were perpetrated, surpassing in cruelty and variety any excesses ever before committed by the soldiers of a civilized country, and rendered more hideous, when we consider that the perpetrators proclaim themselves the most humane and enlightened people of the earth, and endeavour to seduce the subjects of other countries from their allegiance, by the specious but treacherous offer of a liberty pregnant with mischief, and of an equality which has been found to be impracticable.

TO THE PEOPLE OF GREAT BRITAIN.

Friends and fellow countrymen,

The preceding pages, I hope, have convinced you, that no confidence is to be placed in those who talk to you of the good conduct and discipline of the French armies, and that no faith is to be put in the promises of a people, who have deluded many feeble minds into a belief of their assurances, in order that they might the more easily accomplish their purposes of conquest, rapine, and desolation.

In the early part of the French revolution, several liberal-minded persons in Germany entertained a hope that the empire would derive advantage from the emancipation of a powerful nation. But when that revolution testified in

its progress, that its object was not the establishment of wholesome liberty and a just equality of rights, but that it tended to the extinction of civil and religious liberty, to the destruction of all order and happiness in society, and to the gratification of the boundless ambition of the French ; that its decrees were written in blood, and its edicts promulgated by the sword ; the advocates for reform in Germany quickly saw how much reason they had to deprecate the introduction of a system, which, instead of administering relief to their complaints, was teeming with the most destructive evils. None but men of desperate fortunes, of wild ambition, and of heated imaginations, continued to wish for importation of French principles, and the display of the republican standard ; and it is worthy of remark, that throughout that extensive country, the French armies were not joined by any of the inhabitants, except the very refuse of the people ; and that the subjects of the various princes of the empire did not dishonor their country and themselves, either by a disposition to revolt, or by a demand of concessions which the posture of affairs might have rendered it imprudent to refuse.

If then the people of a country, indisputably subject to many serious grievances, continue firm in their allegiance, and reject with scorn the principles which have been insidiously held out to them under the most delusive names, and painted in the most dazzling colours, shall we,

enjoying the greatest portion of rational liberty of any nation in the world—shall Britons, who with reason boast of the most perfect equality of rights, to whom are open all the avenues to wealth, power, and distinctions—shall this country, I say, the envied residence of freedom, justice, and science, not stand equally firm to our constitution? and shall we barter our happiness and independence for revolutionary principles, conceived in sin, and propagated in iniquity? No.—Let us cling to our religion, our laws, and our constitution, as the main supports of every thing that is dear to us; and let us triumph in the reflection, that we have withstood the open attacks and still more dangerous intrigues of our enemies, whilst other countries have been despoiled of their happiness and reduced to the most abject dependance, either by the arms and specious promises of the invaders, or by the treachery, weakness, and discord of their own inhabitants. Neither let us give ear to the pernicious and ill-timed declamations of those who describe us as a people deficient in resources, and who wish us to make concessions to that enemy, whose ambition has already been fed by too much conquest, and avowedly aims at our erasure from the list of nations. Our armies, though overpowered by superior numbers, supported upon the continent their ancient character for bravery and firmness. Our navy rides triumphant upon the seas, and has upon every occasion maintained our superiority over

such of our enemies as have successively ventured to dispute it. Our yeomanry, a bold and independent race, are trained to arms, and eager to signalize their loyalty. Every town of importance contains a body of volunteers, composed of persons of character and property, and attached to the welfare of their country and their King; and our several regiments of the line, of fencibles, and of militia, are for the most part composed of young and healthy men of unquestionable and approved fidelity, who yield not in true courage to the enemy; who are commanded by the flower of the nation, and who form a body of men, more numerous than any that the directory of France can cause to be transported hither, and superior in equipment, discipline, and the justice of the cause in support of which they are enrolled.

How much, my friends, must you rejoice when you compare our present situation with that of the greater part of the countries upon the continent!

Holland, so lately the seat of freedom, commerce, industry, and affluence, having been pillaged by the republic of France, and forced to declare war against Great Britain, by which it lost both its maritime importance and a valuable portion of its foreign possessions, presents at this moment the sad spectacle of a country divided against itself, governed by the intrigues and awed by the arms of France, destitute of commerce, crippled in its navy, defaced almost

from amongst the nations of Europe, and reduced to a mere skeleton of that power which once so nobly contended for real liberty, and disputed with this island the empire of the main.

The Austrian Netherlands, long renowned for agriculture, manufactures, industry, and opulence, now exhibit the same melancholy picture of languor, poverty, and insignificance, rendered doubly galling to the inhabitants by the iron yoke of servitude, which their republican tyrants have imposed upon them. The boasted charter of their liberties, for which they contended with successive sovereigns, is now lost, and the Belgic name is dishonored by a slavish dependence upon its haughty and oppressive conquerors.

The beautiful and fertile countries upon the banks of the Rhine and the Moselle, lie prostrate at the feet of those who had promised them liberty and independence, and under the name of loans, are forced to contribute the last resources of an impoverished territory, for the purpose of enabling the Directory to carry on a war against this country, with which they never were at variance, and with which they had maintained a prosperous and extensive trade. Nor have the more remote cities of Hamburg, Bremen, and Lubeck, been able to avoid the outstretched arm of French rapacity and power; but have been compelled to purchase a dubious tranquillity by the sacrifice of several millions.

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You have seen the Austrian and Imperial eagles flying in every direction before the tri-coloured standard of the republic, and the Emperor of Germany humbly suing for peace, in order to save from impending ruin the capital of his hereditary dominions. He has been compelled to abandon to the ambition of the Directory his Belgic and Italian provinces, the ancient heritage of his family ; and you have seen him reduced to a situation so humiliating, as to be under the necessity of profiting by the perfidy of France, in receiving as an exchange the city of Venice, and some provinces, which, under the solemn assurances of the French, had thrown off the yoke of aristocracy, and had established another form of government under the avowed protection of the Directory.

The treacherous character of the French is no where more fully displayed than in their behaviour to the Venetian people ; for after deluding them with the hopes of liberty, equality, and independence, they pillaged the city of its treasures, destroyed its most splendid institutions and costly ornaments, took possession of its most valuable islands, plundered it of its navy, and finished their perfidious work by delivering up the people to the government of a stranger and of a monarch whom they had always affected to consider as a despot, and as a decided enemy to their maxims of liberty and equality.

You cannot hesitate to regard Italy as entirely submitted to the will of the Directory : The

remaining sovereigns of dismembered Piedmont, Parma, Tuscany, and the Two Sicilies, already tremble in their palaces, and will prolong their political existence but a few months, by their humiliating submission to the decrees of the *Great Nation*; for the conduct of the French soldiery in some, and of the republican emissaries in others of the dominions of those princes, will rouse the people to revenge—the dignity of the French nation will be offended—and the same mockery that was lately practised at Rome, will be employed for the subversion of those states, and with the same success.

When you cast your eyes from Italy across the Mediterranean, you perceive the mighty realm of Spain reduced to the most melancholy state of dependence, and a prince of the house of Bourbon compelled not only to make peace, but to enter into a close alliance with the assassins and destroyers of his family, and to declare war against this country, with whom it is his undoubted interest to live in the strictest bonds of amity and concord. You will observe, too, that the French have it in contemplation to revolutionize the kingdom of Portugal; and perhaps I am not rash in predicting, that the same army which is allowed to traverse Spain for the purpose of subverting the government of Portugal, will in its progress scatter the seeds of revolution, and reap a very ample harvest upon its return.

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Even Switzerland, so happy—so peaceful—and so respected—has not escaped the storm ; but after having for some time averted its fury by the steady care and wisdom of its pilots, is now driven, at the mercy of those whose pleasure it seems to be to wreck every form of government, upon the hideous rocks and shoals of liberty and equality.

Such is the miniature delineation of the actual state of a great portion of the continent, and such are the humiliations to which different countries have been successively reduced by the power, ambition, and machinations of democratic France ! But if the armies of France have been every where triumphant, its navy has been so subdued and crushed as to be unable to contend with us upon the ocean ; its trade, once so considerable, is now no more—the manufactures with which the French supplied all the wealthy nations of the globe, are long since gone to decay—agriculture languishes and sickens—and the shuttle has been exchanged for the musket, and the plough-share for the sabre. Requisition after requisition has torn the husband from his wife, the father from his children, and the laborious sons from the infirm and aged parent ; and they have been sent either to be slain in the field of battle by men with whom they have never been at enmity, or survive only to be tainted by the vices of a ferocious and dissolute banditti.—

Our trade and manufactures, though not carried to that extent which a continuation of peace would have ensured them, still "proudly flourish through the state," and far surpass the commercial enterprizes and successes of any other nation in the world. Agriculture, far from languishing during the war, has been pursued with unexampled vigour and prosperity; all our public institutions continue to thrive under the unremitting assiduity of their governors, and the ceaseless generosity of the public; and the national benevolence has been most nobly displayed in the successive and ample subscriptions for the relief of our wounded sailors and soldiers, and for the benefit of the widows and orphans of those who have fallen whilst fighting the battles of their country. Our islands in the West-Indies have been secured, and augmented by those of the enemy; our possessions in America have continued unmolested; our extensive and valuable territories in the East-Indies have enjoyed the most profound tranquillity; the rock of Gibraltar defies the power of Spain, and we have increased our foreign possessions by the conquest of establishments in Asia and in Africa, whose worth will be duly estimated whenever the proper period for negotiation shall arrive. The intercourse between man and man is preserved here unalloyed by suspicion, and the charms of society remain uncontroled by terror; our wives and daughters sleep without apprehension

of being disturbed by the violator or the assassin, and our property is secured by mild and well-dispensed laws against the public depredator and the private oppressor. Each individual enjoys as great a portion of civil and religious liberty as is necessary to the happiness of man, and compatible with the safety of the kingdom; equality of rights flourishes here in all its purity and vigour; for the greatest and most opulent man in the country is, equally with the meanest and most indigent, amenable to the laws, if he transgresses them; and persons of the most obscure birth may, and frequently do, by their talents and merits, arrive at the greatest offices in church and state, and by their services in the army and navy, obtain the highest honors and distinctions for themselves and their posterity.—

But certain evil-minded persons attempt to undermine every good principle, by instilling into the minds of the lower classes of people, that no confidence is to be placed in holy writ, that there is no future state, and no Supreme Being to whom an account is to be given of our actions here below; and that consequently, if they can but guard against the magistrate and the executioner, they need not hesitate to commit the most atrocious actions. These doctrines are promulgated at village-clubs by schoolmasters and others, who, being restrained from openly preaching insurrection, endeavour to accomplish

their sinister designs by vilifying religion, and denying a state of retribution, with the hope that they shall the more easily urge the vicious to the commission of revolutionary crimes, and to the subversion of that government which has so wisely checked the progress of those enemies to subordination and morality. I trust however that not many persons have been seriously contaminated by these pestilential discourses; and that the government will watch the practices of those who have been heard to debase religion, and who attempt to impress their dangerous notions upon the flexible minds of the young and the undiscerning.—

I have little doubt but that the French will attempt the execution of their plan of invasion upon some part of this or of the sister kingdom; nor is it any slander upon the Directory to suppose, that, next to the conquest of this island, they are desirous of disposing of some of their numerous armies, either amongst the billows of the ocean, or under the arm of British valour and intrepidity. But the most timid need entertain no apprehensions of the success of their senseless enterprize? for if it be probable that their transports should escape the vigilance of our numerous cruisers, and that their ships of war should avoid a conflict (to them inevitably destructive) with our brave and well-appointed squadrons, it is scarcely possible for them to land unperceived upon any part of this populous island, or to disembark their troops and the vari-

ous implements of war without the utmost difficulty and danger. So alert are our soldiers, so well guarded are our coasts, and such excellent precautions have been taken by those who preside over us, that an enemy endeavouring to land would instantly be attacked by a formidable and well-served artillery, and by large bodies of well-disciplined and gallant troops, who would be supported by an host of peasantry eager to testify their loyalty and their abhorrence of revolutionary intruders.—

Prepared as we are, we can have nothing to fear from their attempts ; and having in a former war withstood all the efforts of several united powers, we need not now despair of a victorious and honorable issue.

Let us then be unanimous in our efforts to repel the assaults, and firm in our determinations never to submit to the dictates, of a treacherous and ambitious foe.—Let us check the growth of those principles which have caused so much bloodshed, misery, and injustice in other parts of Europe—Let us endeavour to stop the career of luxury, dissipation, vice, and infidelity—Let us set bounds to our desires, and limits to our passions ; and let us ensure reciprocal esteem and respect by industry, temperance, and decorum, and by the exercise of those virtuous qualities which contribute to the enjoyment of social and domestic happiness, and to the promotion of our future felicity.

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